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New York Times Rated No. 1 In Poll of Nation's Publishers

Special to The New York Times

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., April 27 —The New York Times again has been rated the best newspaper in the country, according to a 1970 survey of newspaper publishers made public by Edward L. Bernays, public relations consultant here.

The Los Angeles Times, which was rated eighth in 1961, in the last of three similar polls, placed second this year. Eight of the top 10 this year were on the 1961 list. The two additions are The Miami Herald and The Wall Street Journal.

Although The New York Times was listed first, the percentage of publishers who rated it among the top 10 declined from 89 in 1961 to 61.

The 1970 survey, as in the previous three, requested the publishers to list the 10 newspapers that had met the goals of "independent journalism, impartial news reporting and crusading for the public welfare, as set up in the credos of publishers Thomas Gibson of The Rocky Mountain News of Denver, Adolph S. Ochs of The New York Times and Joseph Pulitzer of The New York World." The three publishers are now dead.

'Climate of Fear' Seen

Mr. Bernays said that of the 1,560 publishers surveyed, 132, or 8.4 per cent, answered the 1970 questionnaire. He said the response in 1961 was 22 per cent and added: "The notable increase in the number of responses without signature and the decrease of total responses may be due to the apprehensive climate of opinion on freedom of expression."

"A greater trend towards regionalism and a polarization of ideologies was noted," the survey said, continuing: "Strong and divergent views are occasionally presented in the elections. Some publishers' choice of the top 10 in 1970 is restricted to regional newspapers."

"In some cases publishers chose only so-called conservative newspapers and, in others, only so-called liberal newspapers."

The report said: "Comments on some returned questionnaires indicate displeasure with Eastern establishment newspapers, which are often omitted. Increasing pride in their own newspapers is shown by the number of publishers who included their dailies among the top 10, a response not previously noted."

The 10 newspapers of 1970 in order of percentage as listed by the publishers follows:

New York Times	61
Los Angeles Times	51
Louisville Courier-Journal	42
St. Louis Post-Dispatch	38
Washington Post	38
Christian Science Monitor	30
Miami Herald	30
Milwaukee Journal	29
Chicago Tribune	23
Wall Street Journal	20

The 1961 list and percentages were:

New York Times	89
St. Louis Post-Dispatch	62
Christian Science Monitor	52
Milwaukee Journal	45
Louisville Courier-Journal	42
New York Herald Tribune	39
Washington Post and Times Herald	37
Los Angeles Times	35
Chicago Tribune	34
Kansas City Star	22

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